

Town of Chebeague Island Fire Department & Town Hall Study September 6, 2022



Purpose of the Study

Port City Architecture (PCA) was hired by the Town of Chebeague Island, Maine, to study the Fire Department and Town Hall space requirements. PCA evaluated the existing facilities including their location, staffing, building space programs, and provide conceptual plans for renovation and addition to meet the needs of these departments. The study provides our professional recommendations to address the long term needs of the Chebeague Island community.

Facility Recommendations

Assessment

Our first task was to interview both the Fire Department and Town Hall inhabitants to determine the physical space requirements necessary to meet the needs of the town. We based the space program on Chebeague Island's unique requirements and projected growth so that we could compare them to benchmarks from similar sized towns employing modern fire and EMS practices to get the appropriate space needs for the town.

The current 4,400 square foot building houses both the Fire Department and Town Hall. Almost half of the building is used for the apparatus bay, 1600 square feet for fire department support spaces, and only 800 square feet of space is for the Town Hall. Through space programming analysis, both Departments have extremely inadequate space for their needs. The Fire Department needs 8,600 square feet while the Town Hall needs 3,200 square feet to provide adequate services to the community. The existing building does not meet current energy code requirements.

The current Fire Department does not meet modern firefighting and EMS needs, health and safety requirements, and standard support spaces. The current facility has no living quarters, not enough offices, no sprinkler system, no vehicle exhaust system as required by code, and no decontamination room. The fumes from the apparatus equipment flow directly into the dayroom causing potential health issues. The turn-out gear is stored in the apparatus bay instead of in a designated space which is a hazard to the staff. Storage for the Fire Department is at a bare minimum and does not meet their current needs, much less future needs.

The current Town Hall spaces do not meet the town's needs. As stated above, they need four times the amount of space they currently have. The current "entrance" is a space that is shared with the two town clerks. The other room in the back serves as a breakroom, an office for Code Enforcement, assessor, and bookkeeper. There is



no space for meetings. The one bathroom does not meet the plumbing code or the American Disabilities Act. Files are being stored in any spot that is open currently. Many files need to be put in a secured room (Vault) for protection per state requirements and all files need to be organized and easily accessible.

Recommendations

Initial thoughts

Our initial thoughts are to keep both departments on site. With the existing building mostly being apparatus bays, we looked at the Fire Department taking over the entire building and adding an addition to the left for the remaining space needs. This would require a new building for the Town Hall which could be located on site. There are many issues that arise with the Fire Department taking over the entire building. The current building does not meet essential facility code requirements and would require extensive renovations to meet these code requirements. This includes the current exterior concrete masonry unit walls do not meet the structural requirement for essential facility and would need to be removed and replaced. Preliminary examination of the roof structure indicates that it also does not meet essential facility requirements, which would require additional structural members. There is no sprinkler system, which would need to be installed. The existing apparatus bays would need a vehicle exhaust system installed. The extra costs associated with everything mentioned above is not a feasible option. Not to mention, the Town Hall would need an immediate new facility before construction could happen to keep the Fire Department active.

Option A – See A0.1

This will involve a full renovation of the existing building for the Town Hall along with a two-story 9,200 square foot addition for the Fire Department. The addition can only fit on the site in one location and would need to be angled because of site constraints such as the well, septic system, and site setbacks. One of the bays in the existing building will remain with a demising wall separating it from the Town Hall expansion to meet the apparatus demands. Because of the site constraints, the new apparatus bays must be on the opposite side of the site and will result in a split apparatus bay. The apparatus bays will barely meet the requirements for the department based on everything stated above. With the addition of the second floor, an elevator and two stair towers will be required by code which adds approximately 700 square feet of additional space and associated costs. The septic tank will need to be inspected to know if it could handle the extra load. Construction will need to be coordinated carefully to keep the current Fire Station operational while it is being done. Once the Fire Department is out of the existing spaces they occupy currently, Town Hall could immediately move into the rest of the building with minimal costs. Over time, Town Hall could renovate as funds become available while still being operational. The overall square footage Town Hall would have is 3,400 square feet which meets their current needs with minimal future growth of approximately 5-10



years.

Option B – See A0.2

With the existing building not being viable for the Fire Department without substantial improvements, the most cost-effective solution is the Town Hall taking over the entire existing building. This would require the Fire Department to relocate off site in a new 8,600 square foot building. Directly across from the existing site is town owned land that is big enough to house the fire station. There are many advantages with a new station. A one-story building is more cost effective, as a second floor would require two stair towers and an elevator, adding additional cost. The layout of the new building will be more efficient including movement through the building and apparatus circulation. Drive-through bays will be provided to prevent less accidents with the apparatus equipment. This will include everything required for a modern station. As previously stated in Option A, with the Fire Department out of the existing building, Town Hall could immediately move into rest of the building with minimal costs. Over time, Town Hall could renovate as funds become available while still being operational. The overall square footage Town Hall would have is 4,400 square feet which allows future growth for 25 years.

Rough Costs

The current estimated costs for a turn-key project are estimated at \$550 a square foot for brand new and \$325 a square foot for renovations.

Option A

- Renovated of 3,350 square feet for Town Hall = \$1,088,750
- Addition Turn-Key of 9,300 square feet for Fire Department = \$5,115,000
- Total Project Costs of both projects = \$6,203,750

Notes: Inflation of 10% per year

Town Hall renovations can be done over time.

Option B

- Renovated of 4,400 square feet for Town Hall = \$1,430,000
- New Turn-Key of 8,600 square feet for Fire Department = \$4,730,000
- Total Project Costs of both projects = \$6,160,000

Notes: Inflation of 10% per year

Town Hall renovations can be done over time.

Conclusion

Based on the information above, the best option is Option B. The Fire Department would get a station that is adequately sized for their current needs as well as the future growth, has modern firefighting and EMS features, and has health and safety features that are required by code. The apparatus layout on the site will reduce risk of accidents and give the Fire Department an easy drive-in/out to respond to calls



more efficiently. The Town Hall will be able to immediately reduce its space needs by moving into the old Fire Department offices/rooms and renovate space as the funds are available. The overall existing building allows for large growth for the Town Hall.



